# Canadian Moving Picture DIGEST

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*Editor and Publisher*

THE LITTLE PAPER WITH THE BIG IDEAS
*Easy to Digest"*

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## TRIPLETS WITHOUT FAME

CHICAGO has given birth to triplet features. Ten theatres are reported as having presented triplet bills; and they call it Show Business. It reminds me of the old proverb of killing the goose which lays the golden egg, for if double features are a killer, how much more deadly must be the triplet axe.

We have no axe to grind on duals or triplets, for the Digest poll recorded a public vote in favour of the double bill; and we observed that the poll conducted by Sidney Bernstein, one of England's leading exhibitors, returned an 80% vote in favour of duals.

But, is that any reason why the public should get double bills, or triplets, or quintuplets for the price of admission to one feature?

It appears that the enlarged picture presentation does not double, or treble box-office receipts according to exhibitors' reports, the latter which reveal dwindling returns.

It occurs to us, that the presentation of dual and triplet bills IS A SYMPTOM OF DEFEAT. Either the pictures lack Entertainment value, or the Exhibitor is no Showman, revealing an inability to operate his theatre successfully through the Salesmanship of his product.

It cannot be that the public is growing indifferent, for there are too many continued runs on pictures, return dates, packed houses for reissues, and handsome profits for producer-distributors and some exhibitors.

If exhibitors would spend more time at their meetings, looking for profits by way of salesmanship and exploitation talks, instead of picking flaws in contracts, abusing producer-distributors, they would find such meetings worthwhile and profitable. Surely the producer-distributors are not so "dumb" in a business sense, that they cannot establish trade practices which will oil the wheels of prosperity instead of presenting cogs which are continually stopping a harmonious unity of action between buyers and sellers.

For twenty-five years we have heard objections to the film contract and certain business practices, including the much abused two words, "get together".

For God's Sake, why don't you, since you both, exhibitors and producer-distributors, make your living and profits out of the selling of product. It is a common meeting ground upon which sane and normal people should be able to meet. What's stopping you, surely not the friends of either of you?

The problems of our Industry grow internationally large and this will directly affect exhibitors and producer-distributors; how are you both going to meet narrowed markets, which must increase picture prices at home, and decrease picture-profits? Conciliation, should be received with Open Arms, for forewarned is forearmed, we hope.

RAY

RAY LEWIS

PRESENTS

WALT DISNEY'S next feature may be Collochi's "Pinocchio", an Italian fairy-tale. Why not, since "Snow White" has been such a good fairy to Disney, RKO and a world of exhibitors, not forgetting the joy and happiness it has brought to children and the grown-ups.

*The English version of this traditional Italian fairy story, relates the life-story of a puppet, the puppet made by a toymaker by the name of Gepetto.*

*The puppet, carved from a piece of wood, comes to life; talks, walks, enters on many adventures and finally goes to the dogs, for he is swallowed by a dog-fish.*

*Poor little puppet, but what is the difference whether it is the belly of a fish, or the bowels of a grave which swallow the Puppets of Life, when the latter are in the category of mere mortals, denying the Divinity of their Creation?*

GREAT BRITAIN received £7,981,000, which is approximately forty million dollars from the Entertainment Tax, as reported by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his budget report. The estimated tax returns for 1938-39 may be £8,200,000. That is if the battle of the giants at present going on in Great Britain does not slaughter theatre attendance through the blood-drawing of the C.E.A. vs. K.R.S.

*Vienna, happy, laughing Vienna is in tears, and they are not tears of laughter as has been the custom of the Viennese. Along with the report of the suicide of favorites of stage, the music-world, impressarios, comes the announcement which directly concerns our own business, namely, that forty-one out of forty-eight of the film companies representing distribution and importation of films, Jewish-owned companies, have been placed under Nazi administration for the purpose of turning these companies over to Aryan control, or liquidating same.*

*This is one way of getting into business without taking the trouble to work for it; and one way of putting businesses out of business, for the film business may hand out Entertainment, but it is a Business for which experience and a Show sense is necessary.*

*In addition, the Nazis will take over sixty-five percent of the theatres which belong to the Jewish Citizens of Austria, and all pictures imported by film companies will be censored by Nazi rule.*

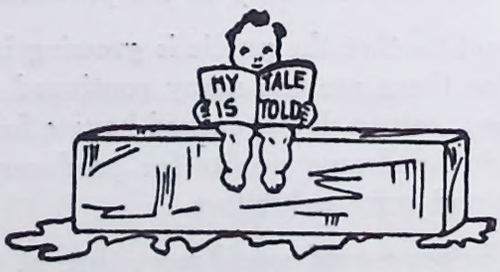
DO I remember, with the introduction of Naziism into Motion Pictures in Germany, that a statement was made by the Nazi rulers that they would not interfere with American-owned Film Interests in the Reich?

And do I remember warning our Film Interests to liquidate and get out while the going was good?

*The United States' protest covering the seizure of American citizens' properties takes the form of an "Emphatic Note" sent by Ambassador Hugh R. Wilson to the German Foreign Minister. The note specifies, "Violation of rights accorded American citizens under the treaty signed December 8th, 1923".*

*Paramount and Universal companies operate theatres at Vienna. The Exchanges there include M-G-M, Paramount and Twentieth Century-Fox.*

*The Nazi reply, through Goering, to the U.S. protest note states, that the protest has no legal status since Americans are not being treated any differently to German Citizens. What Herr Goering has overlooked IS THE TECHNICAL FACT THAT ALL GERMAN-BORN ARE NOT TREATED ALIKE; AND THAT JEWS AND OTHERS HAVE LOST MOST AND ALL OF THEIR CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS; AND THAT THE AMERICAN CITIZENS INVOLVED IN THE PLAN FOR THE SEIZURE OF THEIR PROPERTY ARE TREATED LIKE THOSE GERMANS WHO HAVE NO RIGHTS AND WHOSE CITIZENSHIP HAS BEEN DENIED.*




**Grand National Abandon Production. Remain Distributing Company**

# Digest Reviews and Previews

The picture is not one for people with weak stomachs, but if you like your screen fare on the meaty side, you'll like this. The kids, Billy Halop, Leo Gorcey, Bobby Jordon, Huntz Hall, Gabriel Dell and Bernard Punsley do splendid work, in fact are the whole picture, and Humphrey Bogart gets a better break than he has had of late. Gale Page photographs very well, and looks as if she has something on the ball. More pictures will prove or disprove this belief. Others in the cast include Cy Kendall, Weldon Heyburn, Spencer Charters and Paul Porcasi. Of the kids themselves, Leo Gorcey is outstanding from a dramatic standpoint, and Bobby Jordon repeats his comedy success of "Slight Case of Murder".

Directed by Lew Seiler.

Running time—84 minutes.

★ ★

## "YOU'RE ONLY YOUNG ONCE"

**METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER**

THIS is the first of a new series from the Metro studios, that has been getting considerable praise from the trade and the public. Like the Jones Family series of Fox, these pictures deal with the adventures of a typical American family. Lewis Stone, popular character actor, plays the part of Judge Hardy, head of the Hardy family. Fay Holden portrays Mrs. Hardy, Cecilia Parker and Mickey Rooney are the precocious offsprings, and Sara Haden plays Aunt Milly.

The film is a skillful combination of melodrama and comedy, with a certain amount of pathos injected at various points. The Judge, in this, takes his family on a holiday to Catalina. Immediately Mickey Rooney and Cecilia Parker become romantically entangled, their first love affairs. The poor Judge no sooner gets his romantic offspring straightened out than he encounters a serious financial situation, that threatens to put him and his family out on the street. The folks rush back home, and the Judge succeeds in clearing up his money troubles, thanks to the encouragement of his family.

In their recent announcements, Metro disclosed the fact that they were including no "B" pictures in their 1938-39 line-up. If this means the elimininations of the Judge Hardy series, we are sorry, for this is the type of "B" picture that is a credit to the Industry.

By all means get behind this picture with a suitable selling campaign, for it is a picture that will be enjoyed by all who see it, young and old.

Directed by George B. Seitz, from the screenplay by Kay Van Riper.

Running time—76 minutes.

## PERSONAL MUSINGS

SIR GERALD CAMPBELL, British Consul-General at New York, has just been appointed High Commissioner to Canada from the U.K., succeeding Sir Francis Floud. It was your correspondent's great privilege and pleasure to meet Sir Gerald in New York several months ago, on the occasion of the opening at the Radio City Music Hall of "Victoria The Great". Sir Gerald Campbell was one of the principal speakers at the luncheon given by AMPA to Anna Neagle and Herbert Wilcox, and he literally brought down the house with his witticisms. I learned on that occasion why Sir Gerald is always in demand as an after-dinner speaker, for he possesses a sense of humour completely dis-associated with the popular conception of an Englishman. He is probably the most popular Britisher in New York City, especially among film folk, and is an ardent movie fan. His daughter, Naomi, is prominent in radio and dramatic circles in Manhattan, and Lady Campbell and the other two daughters are well-known in New York musical circles. Sir Gerald is already quite well-known in the Dominion, having travelled through Canada several times. Sir Gerald and Lady Campbell, and their family, will be welcome additions to the diplomatic society of Ottawa.

An error appeared in these pages two weeks ago stating that R. G. March, of 20th Century-Fox in Saint John, N.B., was associated with Colin Danson as part owner of the Strand Theatre, Sussex, N.B. It is not "R. G.", but his son, Walter, who is part owner of the Strand. The Digest hopes that Mr. March, Sr., was not caused any embarrassment by our report.

Mrs. T. Kondert of the Regent Theatre, New Hamburg, Ont., was in Toronto early this week.

Gordon Lightstone of M-G-M, Jimmy Cohen of Canadian Premium Distributors, and Abe Cass of Columbia left yesterday (Friday) on a fishing trip. Gordon took along his $28 reel, and his two solid-gold fish-hooks, which rumour has it, are insured with Lloyd's of London.

Irving Rubine of the Warner Bros. home office is in Toronto doing special exploitation work on "Robin Hood".

"Jay L."

*Montreal, May 19th, 1938.*

*"Dear Miss Lewis:*

*Thank you very much for your telegram which was received yesterday and read at our Convention, held in the Mount Royal Hotel.*

*The Convention, which was one of the most representative ones ever held in the Province of Quebec, was most successful. Upwards of one hundred theatres were represented at the meeting.*

*Thank you again for your telegram.*

*Yours truly,*

*QUEBEC ALLIED THEATRICAL INDUSTRIES, INC.,*

D. A. BURPEE,

*Secretary."*

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**EVERYTHING FOR THE THEATRE FROM SHEET TO STREET**

**Press and Public Lavish In Praise of RKO Radio's "Vivacious Lady"**

By MERRYL LEA

MR. L. C. PEARSON of Dominion Sound Equipments' Montreal office was in Toronto for a few days this week. In an interview with the Digest, Mr. Pearson stated that there was a great deal of installation of new equipment under way in Canada.

"Business is fine, that is as far as the equipment branch of the industry is concerned. As far as box-office receipts, I can make no statement, but our men in the field report that the exhibitors are most optimistic."

"Of course," said The Digest, "with all the reconstruction, building, etc., that is going on in the Dominion, and the promising future boom as the result of the armament manufacturing orders, etc., I suppose this business improvement to which you have referred is at its height now."

"Oh no," said Mr. Pearson, "equipment companies always do their biggest business during the months of August and September."

When business speeds up three months earlier than the customary 'rush' time — it's a sure sign of prosperous days for Canada!

* * *

HAL ROACH will release his pictures through United Artists for the next eight years. His first picture for such release will be "There Goes My Heart". Mr. Roach has released through M-G-M for 13 years, and has two more pictures to complete, starring Laurel and Hardy, for M-G-M.

* * *

JULES LEVY of RKO Radio estimates "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" will gross $3,000,000 in Canada and the United States. States new prints of "King Kong" and "Little Women" are being made and new campaign books being prepared for reissues of these two pictures.

* * *

ERNEST LUBITSCH and Irving Asher will produce for London Films. Mr. Asher will make eight "B" pictures and Mr. Lubitsch four "A" pictures.

* * *

HERBERT WILCOX'S production, "Marie Lloyd" starring Anna Neagle, is being filmed in Technicolor.

# Stop! Look! Listen!

**The Quebec Exhibitors who presented a brief asking for abolition of admission surtax were Henry H. Chauvin, William Lester, J. A. De Deves, E. N. Tabah, D. A. Murray, representing Quebec Allied Theatrical Industries, United Amusement Company, Ltd., and Cartier, Victoria Theatres Limited. Brief specified that the Taschereau Regime imposed the surtax as an emergency measure. The exhibitors contend that the taxes are 25% of the gross revenue of the theatres, and that they total 80% of the net income. They are asking for an adjustment of the theatre tax . . . Al Gaudet resigns as RKO branch office manager at St. John, N.B., to operate the Princess Theatre of that city. Welcome Exhibitor Gaudet . . . Chairman O. Silverthorne, Ontario Censor Board and General Victor Williams, head of Ontario Provincial Police have been in conference for the purpose of discussing uncensored 16 mm. films which are reported as having flooded the province of Ontario. Other films dealing with sex and propaganda and alleged to having been smuggled into the country, are being rounded up, and the police have been ordered to seize all such films and to lodge charges against those responsible for their import and distribution throughout the Province . . . Mr. Thomas E. Irwin, who appeared on behalf of those interested in sponsoring the Neely Bill was a representative of the legislative bill-drafting bureau of Columbia University. He stated that he had worked on the draft of the Neely Bill and when he was questioned by Charles Pettijohn during the hearings he admitted that there was no one available for the drafting of the bill who had ever produced or directed a motion picture, and that he had never had any experience, neither had those gentlemen who assisted in drafting the bill, any experience as distributors of motion pictures. An example of how much a government knows about trade practices of our Industry and what we may expect in the event of Government control . . . Jascha Heifetz, world famous violinist will make his screen debut in "The Exiles" purchased by Samuel Goldwyn. The authors are George Sklar and Vera Caspary. Heifetz has a dramatic role to portray, which reminds us — where is Stokowski? Haven't heard about him lately, save through a "GARBLED" report . . . Chicago has given birth to triplets, 10 theatres played three features each — and they call it show business! . . . Haskell Masters, Canadian Manager of United Artists announces that employees of every exchange in Canada, received one week's salary as a bonus, following the winning of the sales drive in which Canada lead . . . Canada, the little five percent territory, famous as Kipling's "Lady of the Snow" certainly reveals herself as no frozen asset to American producer-distributors, for Canada has lead in no fewer than four American continent sales drives. Twentieth Century-Fox won by Jim O'Loghlin, United Artists Drive won by Haskell Masters, Warner Bros. Drive won by Wolfe Cohen and RKO Radio Drive won by W. S. Jones of Vancouver according to our most recent reports. In addition, Branch Managers and salesmen all played a conspicuous part as Canadian winners. All this at a time when the wail of box-office receipts from across the border does not indicate a whale of a good time.**

## EXHIBITORS CHOOSE BEST PICTURES

### "THE GOLDWYN FOLLIES"

"This picture had its first run for the north end in our house. An excellent picture from every standpoint, it did very good business for us."

*H. FREEDMAN,*
*Manager, Circle Theatre,*
*Toronto, Ont.*

### "LIFE OF EMILE ZOLA"

"'EMILE ZOLA' was the best picture I played during April. It did marvelous business at the box-office, and every patron went out satisfied they had seen a fine motion picture."

*JACK HUTT,*
*Manager, Academy Theatre,*
*Toronto, Ont.*

### "BOY OF THE STREETS"

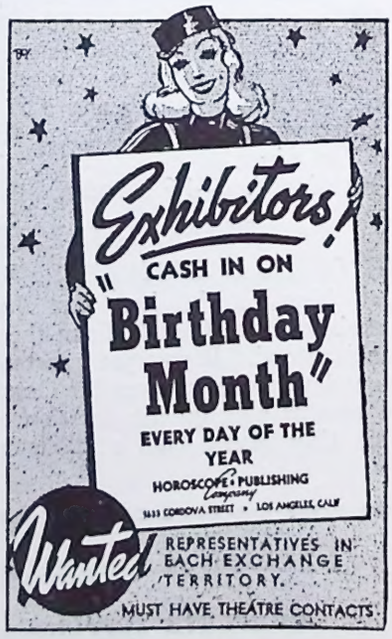
"The best picture we played during April was Monogram's 'BOY OF THE STREETS'. An excellent picture from an independent company, and was particularly good for our neighbourhood."

*IRVING FIELD,*
*Manager, Duchess Theatre,*
*Toronto, Ont.*

### "HAPPY LANDING"

"I would say 'HAPPY LANDING', starring Sonja Henie and Don Ameche, was the best picture played here during the month of April. While not as good as Sonja's first picture, it was well received by our audiences."

*GEORGE E. DOWBIGGIN,*
*Manager, Gaiety Theatre,*
*Winnipeg, Man.*




## Warners Reduce Program From 60 to 52 But Keep Original Budget

# British Film Digest

By WARD SHAFTESBURY

SEVEN years ago I went to see the London production of Bernard Shaw's "St. Joan" — I cannot remember who played the heroine nor can I remember the director's name but I do recollect that it was an admirable play. Now I hear that Paul Czinner is to direct Elizabeth Bergner in "St. Joan" for the screen and the script has been written by the bearded bard himself. Not having seen "Pygmalion", the first of Shaw's plays to be filmed, I am in no position to say as to the rank of G.B.S. as a scenarist — however, I rather feel that the epic of Joan of Arc would be better off in the hands of a man less addicted to verbiage than our Irish friend — though Shaw has commented "The scenario is my job and not that of a Hollywood script writer", I would feel happier if the latter had lent his hand to the job. The drama of Joan should be painted on the screen with great brush-strokes full of the colour and life of the period — the movement should be swift, the scenic changes frequent and numerous; tongue-jousting should be reduced to a minimum.

The dean of footlight autocrats would disagree with me vehemently in all this — in his words "Since the movies became talkies I have been not only willing but anxious to have my plays filmed; but I have had to wait for the film people to discover that talkies are not movies with spoken subtitles and that dramas are not children's picture books". What Mr. Shaw does not seem to realize is that film policy is dictated, in Hollywood at least, by public demand — and it is a truism that the general film-going public like their dramas to be as near as possible to 'children's picture books' — witness "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" which has had a phenomenal success by adhering to the very formula that Shaw is attempting to throw into the discard.

Mr. Shaw would probably say "Who in heaven is interested in the public, you fool, I'm making this film for Aldous Huxley and the Immortals".

## SHORT SHOTS

CHRISTOPHER ROBIN won't be seeing them 'changing the guards at Buckingham Palace' for quite a while if Walt Disney's negotiations with author A. A. Milne are successful — they'll be taking Chris off to Hollywood to star in a third Disney cartoon feature — the second is "Pinocchio", now in production . . . Korda's "The Drum" is running into its fifth week at the Odeon, Leicester Square . . . Elizabeth Bergner is going to star in a new Margaret Kennedy story as yet unnamed — shooting starts at Pinewood in June . . . Beautiful Vivien Leigh leaves the studios for an interlude on the London stage where she will play the title role in "Serena Blandish", Yankee author S. N. Berhman's "fabulous comedy" — Berhman wrote the highly successful Lunt-Fontaine epic, "Amphitryon 38" . . . Lancashire Gracie Fields will take a stab at Cockney songs in her new Music Hall film "Picadilly Circus" soon to start filming . . . United Artists is still rumour-full — Korda and Irving Asher are now on the high seas with a deal in their pockets — Probs. are that Asher will produce "B" raters for the English colonial market and Korda will do super product for the World trade . . . Scotland had its first world film premiere when "Bonnie Scotland Calls You" was shown at Glasgow concurrently with the opening of the Empire Exhibition . . . Bolton's Theatre Royal has just completed the first large, fully-equipped gas-proof and bomb-proof shelter in England — the shelter is capable of accommodating seven hundred people for four hours and is extremely accessible . . . . Gracie Fields' "We're Going To Be Rich", the million dollar 20th Century-Fox picture hit the world market last night at a gala Premiere in aid of the "Newspaper Press Fund" — Gracie herself was there and the show was most favourably received . . . And that is all for for this week — things are as quiet as a country village at three o'clock Tuesday afternoon!

**Monogramites leaving Penn. Station, N.Y., bound for the recent Monogram Convention, held at Cincinnati.**

# Metro Leads Again

## Buys Film Rights To 13 Stories

PRODUCING companies are busy planning story material for their 1938-39 program. Nine producers purchased 37 story properties.

The biggest buyer, M-G-M, has just acquired motion picture rights to 13 stories; three plays, eight originals, one novel and one magazine story.

The line-up includes:

"The Rosary", play by Edward E. Rose.

"The House of Glass", by Marcin.

"Castle Sinister", Collier's magazine serial by J. P. Marquard.

"Dancing Co-ed", novel by Albert Treynor, to star Eleanor Powell.

"The Devil With Love", based on Noel Coward's play, "Private Lives", to star Fernand Gravet. Mervyn Le Roy will produce

"Give and Take", original by George Bruze, Harry Ruskin, Tom Lennon and George Oppenheimer. Starring Robert Taylor also Maureen O'Sullivan, Frank Morgan, Guy Kibbee and Nat Pendleton in cast. Sam Zimbalist, producer, and Richard Thorpe will direct.

"Hold That Kiss", original by Stanley Rauh.

"A Hundred To One", original by Pauline London and Alfred Taylor.

"Milady Goes Along", original by James Edward Grant.

"Ol' Man River", original by Oscar Hammerstein II.

"Tarzan", 3 Edgar Rice Burroughs, purchased from Sol Lesser of Principal Productions.

Other purchases made were: three originals by Twentieth Century-Fox, one novel by Warner Bros., two originals by Principal Productions, four magazine stories by Monogram, one original by Republic. RKO Radio has purchased "Memory of Love", a novel by Bessie Breuer for an Irene Dunne picture; Hagar Wilde and Dudley Nichols will do the screenplay, and George Haight will produce.

### Adopts Double-Bills

Ottawa, Ont. — The Elgin Theatre here, which opened with a policy of first-runs of United Artists releases, all of which have enjoyed extended runs of two weeks or more, has adopted a summer policy of double-bills, with a reduction in admission charges during the summer. "The Goldwyn Follies", which recently concluded a successful engagement of two weeks, was the last of the product from United Artists for the present season.

### Canadian District Wins First Prize Money

**Wolfe Cohen**
*Canadian District Manager*

New York, N.Y. — The Canadian sales district of Warner Bros. Pictures, Inc., under the leadership of Wolfe Cohen, district manager, took first place money — $12,500 — as first prize money in the recently completed Sears' Drive, it was announced at the company's Eastern and Canadian convention last week. Carl Leserman, assistant general sales manager, who acted as co-ordinator of the drive, presented the check to Wolfe Cohen.

The money will be divided among the following branch offices in the Canadian district: Montreal, M. J. Isman, branch manager; Winnipeg, Gordon Simmons, branch manager; Toronto, H. O. Paynter, branch manager; St. John, Lew McKenzie, branch manager; and Vancouver, Joseph Plottel.

### Casino Theatre Fire

Toronto, Ont.—The Casino Theatre, Queen Street, suffered damages of $5,000, in a fire which started backstage last Friday, and forced approximately 800 persons to leave the theatre. Patrons left the house quietly, without any signs of panic, and no one was hurt. Members of the cast of the stage show blamed the fire on the "Friday 13th" jinx.

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## THEATRE CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION

**Timmins, Ont.**

Rumour is prevalent here this week that three lots on Mountjoy Street have been purchased for the purpose of erecting a theatre. Inquiries from the real estate agent who handled the deal, failed to either confirm or deny the rumour.

**MacLeod, Alta.**

Manager Dan Boyle, of the Empress Theatre, is having the front of the building altered, and the lobby is being given a coat of paint and kalsomine. The old entrance has been dismantled, and a new entrance is being built almost level with the sidewalk. Glass panels are being employed.

**Lachine, Que.**

The Empress Theatre, 73 Notre Dame St., Lachine, will undergo extensive alterations and improvements. Plans call for a new facade, new floors, walls and ceiling treatment. It is also proposed to redecorate the interior of the theatre.

**Kirkland Lake, Ont.**

According to Harry Atkins, theatre manager, the new Capitol Theatre will be completed and ready for opening by June 10. The house entered the last stages of construction last week when the contractors started the extensive inside job of plastering.

**Delhi, Ont.**

Ley Construction Company of Toronto has been awarded the general contract for the proposed new theatre building here. Tenders are being accepted for wiring, metal lath, kalamein doors, structural glass and roofing. Owner is Richard D'Hondt of Delhi.

**St. Catharines, Ont.**

The proposal to erect a theatre on St. Paul St., west of the Capitol Theatre will be abandoned with the purchase of the site by the Famous Players Canadian Corp. from the Hanson Theatres. The site will be used as a parking lot for patrons of the Capitol, according to R. J. Harrison the manager. The site was originally purchased by Hanson Theatres from the McColl-Frontenac Oil Company.

**Saskatoon, Sask.**

Nate Rothstein, owner of the Roxy Theatre, Saskatoon, has announced his intention to construct theatres in two of Western Canada's most northerly centres, Goldfields, Sask., and Yellowknife, N.W.T. Within the past two months, Mr. Rothstein, who also operates theatres in Yorkton and Assiniboia, acquired the theatre at Wilkie and completed construction of one at Beardmore, in the heart of the mining territory of Northern Ontario.

## Charles R. Rogers Out As V-P. In Charge Of Production At Universal. Clifford Work Succeeds.